RESTORATION REVIEW

The New Creation . . .

NEW WINE AND FRESH SKINS

No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on to an old coat; for then the patch tears away from the coat, and leaves a bigger hole. Neither do you put new wine into old wine-skins; if you do, the skins burst, and then wine runs out and the skins are spoilt. No, you put new wine into fresh skins; then both are preserved. (Matt 9:16-17)

Any man with a new idea *is* a problem and *has* a problem. He *is* a problem because he is asking people to make changes that threaten the *status quo*. People are uncomfortable in the face of something new, especially when it questions long-established traditions. He *has* a problem because it is so difficult to sell something new in the market of men's minds. In this passage Jesus is talking about the problem of a new idea, His own idea of what the kingdom of God is all about.

Human history could well be described as the story of the struggle of new ideas. Columbus had quite a time with his idea of a new world across the seas; Galileo was scorned and excommunicated for his idea of gravitation; Copernicus was forced to retract his view that the universe is sun-centered rather than earth-centered; Pasteur may have delivered man from much of the danger of the mad dog through his research in bacteriology, but in his own day he himself was considered mad because of his innovative thinking; even the idea of a fresh translation of the Bible has had to struggle against the prejudices of a closed mind. Thus the history of progress is closely related to the history of ideas.

Jesus is not here renouncing His Jewishness, nor is He rejecting Judaism as such. It was proper for the old wine to be in the old skins, and He did not want the skins lost by taking in the new wine. The old system had served its purpose, and it was a matter of the old yielding to the new. There was no way to fuse the new with the old, so the old had to go, insofar as justification is concerned. The new cloth and the new wine represent the new spirit of the kingdom of God, and there is no way to inject the new spirit into the old system. Some of John's disciples and the Pharisees had some such idea, for

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It is the taste of this new wine that we all need today. The cup is often denied us by the same kind of fallacy and confusion that Jesus was seeking to dispel in giving this homely illustration. They all knew back then, before the days of Sanforization, that no one could sew a piece of new cloth into an old garment and get by with it, for the new cloth would shrink and tear the garment. So with new wine: it would break the old bottles because of their inflexibility.

It is not only a problem of confusing the new and the old that the Master is talking about. It is a matter of confusing grace and works. It is the dreadful fallacy of supposing that Jesus' mission was to take away one law and lay down another. He was indeed "the end of the law," to use Paul's language, but he was not the beginning of another law. God did not nail the old law to the cross, and then turn around and through the Christ give mankind still another law. It was not a matter of law begetting law, but a matter of the law serving as a tutor who was to deliver us to a Person, who was the very essence of grace. "The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men," is the apostle's description of the Lord's coming. "The Law was given through Moses, while grace and truth came through Jesus Christ," John 1:17 tells us.

The new wine is the gift of a Person, not a book of laws. It is the faith, hope, and love that makes the heart glad, not a system of works that motivates fear and uncertainty. It is the intoxicating Spirit of God that assures the believer that all is well with his soul, not the paralyzing influence of rules of do's and don'ts that both scare and starve the soul.

This taste of new wine makes one a free man in Christ. One such free man could say in Heb. 13:9: "It is good that our souls should gain their strength from the grace of God, and not from scruples about what we eat, which have never done any good to those who were governed by them," and in Romans 14:17 we are told: "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but justice, peace, and joy, inspired by the Holy Spirit."

These are the values that starving disciples of our day are longing for: strength, goodness, peace, joy, inspiration. We are learning the hard way that "the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." The Master invites us to drink the new wine with Him: "Here I stand knocking at the door; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and sit down to supper with him and he with me" (Rev. 2:20). To sit with Jesus can be just as real and personal to any of us who thirst for such a warm communion as it was to the early disciples.

The new wine is ours to drink as we drive along the highway, compose a letter to a friend, meet a new acquaintance, or deal with a delicate problem at work. "For indeed we were all brought into one body by baptism, in the one Spirit, whether we are Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free men, and that one Holy Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink" (1 Cor 12:13). What a neglected truth that is: *the Holy Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink!* And we are urged to drink until we are intoxicated! (Eph 5:18) When we drink deeply of what Jesus has to give, we will never again be thirsty (John 4:14). That is the passage that speaks of Jesus providing for us "an inner spring always welling up for eternal life."

The scriptures also speak of "the wine of God's wrath, poured undiluted into the cup of his vengeance." Mankind thus has a choice of wines, and what a pity it is that the vast majority, including even those who profess Him, choose never to open the door and allow Jesus to become a meaningful reality in their lives.

We have had enough of the old skins of obscurantism, institutionalism, schism, and all the rest. We are sick and tired of hearing the same old bromides and cliches that never did more than to tickle the ears of our forebears. We long for the fresh skins, the new contexts in which the story of Jesus moves creatively into the twentieth century. This may be in a coffee house in the inner-city, in bull sessions on a university campus, a street corner in Harlem, prayer gatherings in a private home, or a basement Bible class at a big city congregation.

The fresh skins that Jesus speaks of are the honest and good hearts that hunger for truth, wherever they may be found. The new wine of Christ's love is thus to be poured into the fresh skins of suffering humanity, and not to be identified with an institutionalism that has long since grown cold to anything spiritual. The new wine of the Holy Spirit fills the true body of Christ, which is not to be identified with the institutional form of religion. Any effort to relate the new wine with such old skins will be futile. It is time for us to throwaway the old bottles of our own religious pride and sectarian partyism, and ask God to create within us a new heart that will be receptive to His indwelling.

The old prayer of David is in order, for it is a call for new wine in fresh skins:

Create a pure heart in me, O God,
and give me a new and steadfast spirit;
do not drive me from thy presence
or take thy Holy Spirit from me.

There are three kinds of people: creators of culture, bearers of culture, and destroyers of culture.—Hitler

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THE UNWELCOMED GUEST

It was most encouraging to have someone mention the leadings of the Holy Spirit. This is scoffed at here in no uncertain terms. We still believe this to be how we survive as Christians.

This statement comes from a sister who lives in the heart of Tennessee, the stronghold for Churches of Christ. She is telling us that in those parts it is not acceptable to suggest any such thing that the Holy Spirit has the role of *leading* the children of God. Indeed, one is scoffed at who talks in any such manner. We have to conclude that even though the Spirit is the Holy Guest, He is the Unwelcomed Guest to many of our folk in Tennessee and elsewhere.

Though our people have shown only passing interest in what the sin against the Holy Spirit might be, we do well to be reminded that Jesus does say: "If anyone speaks against the Holy Spirit, for him there is no forgiveness, either in this age or in the age to come." That does mean *something*, and those who are inclined to speak lightly of the Holy Spirit should bear in mind that He ranks high in heaven's judgement.

And there has been too much scoffing. The elder who was defying any innovations relative to our understanding of the Spirit by his insistence that "We're not going to have any of that Holy Spirit stuff around here!" may be getting close to the sin against the Spirit. We too easily poke fun at those who speak in tongues and those who value the leading of the Spirit. After all, for a Bible-loving people like ourselves we need to give more attention to what the scriptures say about the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Take this matter of being *led* by the Spirit. The Bible is by no means silent on the subject. Take Romans 8:14: "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." The *New English Bible* says: "All who are moved by the Spirit of God are sons of God." Schonfield, the Jewish translator, has it: "It is those who are led by the Spirit of God who are sons of God." It is superficial of us to dispose of this by making it mean no more than that we are to read the Bible, find out what it says and do it, and thus be led of the spirit. Especially since Paul wrote that statement at a time when the saints had no such scriptures as we have.

Gal. 5:18 also says it: "If you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law." And at least thrice the scriptures teach us to "Walk by the Spirit." These instructions go well with so much else that is said about the Spirit: "Fellowship in the Spirit" (Philip. 2:2); "Live by the Spirit (Gal. 5:25); "Pray at all times in the Spirit" (Eph. 6:18); "Sealed with the Holy Spirit" (Eph. 1:13); "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) "By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13); "By the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body" (Rom. 8:13); and many more.

The Bible says so much about the Christian's life in the Spirit that it should be quite normal to hear a brother refer to "the leadings of the Spirit." It is nothing to fear and certainly nothing to scoff at.

Our hang-up on this subject seems to be that we view our relationship with the Spirit as literary rather than personal. The Spirit is deposited in a book, and it is as we absorb the book that we benefit from the Spirit. But this view does not fit what the book itself says, for we are told that "the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:27). The same scripture says that "the Spirit helps us in our weakness." The Spirit is thus a *Person* who helps us and prays for us. He also "enlightens our inward eyes" so that we might better appreciate the glory and majesty of God (Eph. 1:18).

This is hardly a literary relationship; it goes far beyond paper, glue and ink. It is deeply personal, for it is in the Spirit that the Christian prays and from whom he draws inspiration. This is indeed enhanced by the information the scriptures provide, but "fellowship in the Spirit" can be as real to us today as it was to Paul in his Roman cell.

Our people may be uneasy with the notion of being led by the Spirit because they have not yet accepted the fact that the Christian is to *receive* the Spirit. The Bible even teaches us that we are to *ask* for the Spirit. We are to invite the Holy Guest into our hearts, bid him to take up His abode in our bodies. What a glorious contemplation! And yet how often do we hear the request made? How often do we in our assemblies ask God to give us His Spirit?

In 1 Thess. 4:8 Paul describes God as the one who gives the Holy Spirit to us, and in Acts 5:32 we are told that God gives the Holy Spirit to all those who obey Him. And the neglected portion of Acts 2:38 tells us that as Christians we have the promise of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

And how do you like this rendition of Lk. 11:11-13 in the *New English Bible*.

"Is there a father among you who will offer his son a snake when he asks for fish, or a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you, then, bad as you are, know how to give your children what is good for them, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

The Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! Do we ask? Do we really want the Holy Guest to come into our lives? Or is He the Unwelcomed Guest?

It is noteworthy that Paul bids those who had long since been baptized to "Be filled with the Spirit." To whatever measure the Spirit came to us when we were immersed into Christ, as Acts 2:38 suggests He does, can we not pray to be *intoxicated* by His indwelling.

Is it our carnality that keeps us from seeing the beauty of such passages as 1 Cor. 6:19? "Do you not know that your body is a shrine of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the Spirit is God's gift to you? You do nor belong to yourselves; you were bought at a price. Then honour God in your body."

This is the Spirit that God has given as "the pledge that we shall enter upon our heritage" when at last God redeems our bodies. Indeed, the promised Holy Spirit dwells within us as a guest of heaven. But He cannot possibly dwell in a heart that will not welcome Him.—*the Editor*

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COMPLEXION: BROWN

One of my Negro students was showing me his I. D. card, issued to him by one of the branches of the military. Though I did not mention it to him, it struck me as strange that in their description of him they identified him as "Brown" in the space asking for *Complexion.* Not Negro. Not black. But *Brown.*

It made me curious as to how they might have identified a Latin American, but I carried the matter no further. But it did cause me to study the young man's complexion as he went on with his purpose for calling on me. He *was* a *brown* man. His bright white teeth were accentuated by their dark brown background. But his black tie clearly testified to the fact that he was *not* black. The military was correct. He was brown.

Yet the I. D. card in the hands of a military policeman might be misleading, for we have arbitrarily divided the human family, whether soldiers or not, into white, black, brown, red, and yellow. And by such arbitrary guidelines the M. P. might be looking for a Latin, for they are the *browns.*

I sat there in my office at the college pondering that description—*Brown.* The Negro is not really black, but brown. Dark brown in some instances perhaps, but still brown. Then I looked at my own complexion, placing my hand against my white shirt. I am clearly no more *white* than my student was *black.* A clown sometimes paints his face white, which is in bold contrast to the natural color of his "white" skin. A white man would be a scarecrow or a freak, as would a red man or a yellow man.

We are indeed all brown. God's great sea of humanity is all the way from very fair to very dark, but the hue is brown, as is so much in the universe. I began to look at my friends around the campus from this perspective. A fellow philosopher is a Chinese gentleman, born in Peking, and as delightful a person as can be imagined. He has a "reverence for life" philosophy after the order of Albert Schweitzer, which expresses itself especially in a love for cats. He is such an unforgettable person that I may have to do an article on him one day. Anyway, I looked at him anew and asked myself how it ever happened that the Chinese should be called *yellow.* He too was clearly brown. A military I. D. card would no doubt do him justice. Complexion: Brown.

Latins are all over the campus, especially in the form of Cubans, refugees from Castro's dictatorship. Most of them are professors who are still having trouble with their English, but they are a friendly lot. They agonize over what is happening to such institutions as the University of Havana, whose research in medicine and other fields was once among the most fruitful in the world. They are of course all brown. Not brown like shoes are brown exactly, but still brown. Their own hue of brown. Not brown like Negroes are brown. And not brown like Caucasians are brown.

So it is with all men. We are all varying shades of brown. The differences are not as great as our racial conflicts would suggest. And once we get beyond the pigment of the skin the unity of mankind is even more evident. We have the same needs, the same emotions, the same drives. Triumph and tragedy come to us all, and our responses to them are very similar, irrespective of our shade of brown. The birth cry of a firstborn is as sweet a sound to a light brown woman as to a dark brown woman, and the cruel hand of death that snatches away a loved one is as bitter to one as to the other. Life is difficult for us all, and victory can come only as men see each other in the image of God, however brown.

I have a friend in these parts, one recently liberated from racial bigotry, who has his own way of eliciting a little thought along these lines. Whenever someone is identified as "a colored man," he responds by kindly asking, "What color?" It is a neat way of pointing out that if the Negro is colored, then we all are. And is the color really so different after all? And even if color is clearly distinguishable, what does it really matter?

This was the point I was trying to make to my little Benjy, then only 8 years old. It was his time to pass the credit card out to the attendant serving our automobile. For years that has been a big deal, handing over the credit card, and each of the three children has succeeded in confusing me as to why this has to be such a problem. Well, it was Benjy's time, or so it seemed once we went through the usual rigmarol. But I make them wait until the attendant is through before they start waving the card in his face. "Now can I give the card to the Negro man," said Benjy. I handed the card to Benjy. He passed it to the attendant. Then the attendant passed it back to Benjy. Then Benjy hands it back to me. Big deal.

A mile or so down the road I asked Benjy, "Why did you ask me if you could hand the card to the *Negro* man?" He thought for a moment, probably wondering if he had pronounced the word the way I had taught him to. He is something, that boy is. In reference to Negroes, we had tried through the years to make no point of any difference between black and white, so if we had company coming over we refrained from making any speech about how there's to be a Negro in the crowd and therefore be careful what you say. We simply said nothing about it. Well, years ago when he was but 5 or 6, I took him with me to get a girl at one of the T.W.U. dorms who needed a ride to a party at our house. I said nothing to

Benjy about her being Negro, but I will admit that I was a little apprehensive about what he might say, knowing as I did that black people were a curiosity to him.

On the way to the house Benjy found a long enough gap in the conversation to slide in front of her, and with a smile on his innocent little face asked her, “Are you a Negro?,” pronouncing the word both accurately and lovingly. She was obviously pleased. “Indeed I am?,” she responded, and she said it in such a way that he saw that she was thankful to be what God made her.

Well, that’s the Benjy that wanted to hand the card to the Negro man. He defended himself by saying, “Well, he was a Negro, wasn’t he?” “Yes, he was,” I admitted. But I added, “Why was it that the last time you handed the card to the attendant you didn’t say, ‘Daddy, can I hand the card to the *white* man?’ *You just* said *man* when he was white. Why didn’t you *just* say *man* this time? Why *Negro* man?”

It set him to thinking, and it is something for us all to think about. Color consciousness is a sign of our immaturity. If a fellow man can be to us one for whom Christ died, then we have the answer to most problems of personal relationship. One of the great truths of the Bible is the declaration that “God made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth.” Complexion? Does it really matter?

There is talk these days among the Negroes about “a black Christ,” which is as much of a fallacy as talk of “a white Christ” or “a Jewish Christ:’ And some of the rebels are telling us to take our “blue-eyed Jesus” and begone. Perhaps we deserve such a rebuke, not because we have been guilty of nationalizing Jesus, but because we have failed to make the religion of Jesus truly catholic in our lives. So it really isn’t Jesus they fault, but the Jesus they see in us. We are not just white, but also affluent, urbane, middle-class, sophisticated. We are impatient with odor, dirt, untidiness, simplicity, hair, uncouthness, all of which probably characterized the man Jesus. We are impressed with fame, fortune, prestige, position. The real Jesus, blue-eyed or not, would be considered a nut among the professed Christians of middle-class America.

The truth is that if Jesus should be issued an I. D. card, he too would be described “Complexion: Brown,” like all the rest of us.—*the Editor*

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IS THE FUTURE OURS?

It is proper, we may suppose, for man to be conscious of the morrow. He seems to be thinking more about the future these days than at anytime in his history. It is partly a concern for survival and security, for there are such weighty issues as pollution and over-population. But there is much more. As never before man is in search for meaning. He

hopes that the future will in some way provide that sense of direction that has escaped our generation.

An illustration of this concern was a recent conference conducted by Crozier Theological Seminary on Religion and the Future, which was staffed by notables from several of the major areas of our culture. Those who attended the conference came away saying that they could never return to life as usual, that it was “a mind-blowing experience,” and that they “suffered from information overload:” This was because the forecasts, trends, and ideas about tomorrow were so momentous. With the new information at hand about what the future might bring they felt they were standing on the threshold of a new world.

Harvey Cox of Harvard was there, and he talked about creating model utopian communities as a basis for creating world community. It was suggested that the next few decades will be revolutionary, for technology will usher in such sweeping changes that the lives of us all will be drastically altered. Julian Bond, the Negro legislator of Georgia, observed that there is no need to talk about world communities if we can’t get the pollution and racial problems solved. Charles Williams, head of the World Future Society and one who might properly be called a “futurist”, expressed the view that we have no more than 15 years to decide whether we move creatively into a new world or whether we continue to gravitate into some kind of catastrophe.

The futurists seemed to agree that the character of tomorrow’s world depends a great deal on the quality of today’s values. They have no doubt but what technology will produce an environment for us far beyond anything we can now imagine, and that if we can keep our values straight we can move toward “the abundant life” for all peoples of the earth. John Calhoun, ecologist of the National Institute of Mental Health, expressed hope that “the compassionate revolution” is on the horizon, which will bring such philanthropy and goodwill as to stagger the imagination. It is something like a description of the millennium.

What a challenge this is for the Christian! Let us all resolve to usher in a revolution that the world has not yet witnessed—the compassionate revolution. Arthur Scopenhauer, the pessimistic philosopher who saw the whole life as fierce struggle, recognized compassion as the greatest of the virtues and as the answer to his own pessimism. There is no adjective that better describes our Lord than *compassionate,* but there is no likeness of Him that is so opposed to the temper of our culture. Ours is an insensitive age. War, crime, violence, tragedy. suffering and injustice are so commonplace that we are complacent in the presence of them.

A future without compassion is indeed a bitter contemplation. Some of us have the opportunity to reflect the tenderness of Jesus in the classrooms of the nation. Others in the ghettoes, factories, offices. And some even in the halls of congress and the conference tables. The future is ours if we enter it in "the meekness and gentleness of Christ."

All the voices at the conference were not in this direction. Some, like the prophets of Israel, predicted an early demise of our affluent society and the fall of our nation. The world is in such throes that it has no way to recover. The future gives us no greater opportunity than to make the best of a lost cause and to pick up what pieces we can.

Such gloomy forecasts are realistic if we choose to be a nation that forgets God, and if our churches elect to place their own institutional well-being above individual need. The future can be ours only as the present can be ours. It must be directed, not by men to whom God is dead, but by God-intoxicated men. Like Jesus has done for us, so we must do for the future: *give ourselves so that the world may have life and have it abundantly.*

The most insidious notion set forth by the futurists, however, was the humanistic idea that it must be man's ingenuity that builds a better tomorrow. Technology and science will save us from destruction. Man is to be the creator of a new age. Even now he is "building the first public stairway to the stars." Shades of Babel!

We must remind ourselves that sin will be as real in the future as now, and that the carnality in man will not diminish with time. The grace of God. and it alone, can bear us along into the future. It is God that presides over history, and man can "make history" only to the extent that he yields to the will of God in his life.

The future can be ours if we strive to make it God's. We can be creators of a new age if we become fellow-workers with God, junior architects under the command of the Master Builder.—*the Editor*

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THE DEMISE OF CLERICAL PREROGATIVES

There has been enough clericalism in our Protestant culture to keep us going for a long time, and we need not waste energy trying to determine how much Roman Catholicism has influenced this. True, the Roman priests set the pace for a long time in sitting in judgment over men's souls. They are not now quite like they once were. Protestants too are making some head-way in narrowing the gap that has long existed between clergy and laity. It appears that those who wish to hold to the old assumptions of clerical prerogatives are going to have a tough time of it in years ahead.

For generations the typical American community pampered “the Parson” to such an extent that nobody expected him to do any work. The fellows would get together and paint his house while the ladies were delivering him a ham. No physician would have considered sending him a bill for medical services. He hardly ever made a purchase at regular price. If the product were not given to him, it was understood that there would be a ten percent discount. When he visited with his brethren, the best bed was reserved for him (even when his body was young and his back strong) and food was prepared that the family could hardly afford. When the preacher came for a visit, it effected the home something like the visit of a monarch to a small municipality. The children came to realize that it was a time of trial.

Since the birth of our nation the clergyman has seldom been expected to take up arms for his country. Even when young and single he is exempt, while older men with families in his parish are required to leave home for years to fight a war. The fallacy has long endured that since a man is called to preach he is to be treated differently. Unlike the apostle Paul who worked with his hands alongside those to whom he ministered, the clergyman has been set apart with white cuffs bedecked with gold and unsoiled hands. Many railroads issued him a free pass, and he always traveled at half-fare. The bus lines followed suit by issuing clergy certificates. Surprisingly enough some modern airlines are keeping this folly alive by doing something similar.

These things are not the most serious forms of clericalism, if this is the right term to use. Indeed, the things we have referred to are as much the fault of the people as the clergy, for out of their pride, or perhaps their sense of guilt or naivete, the people have sought to make something like a petty king out of their ministers. Clericalism becomes pernicious as well as presumptuous when it seeks to control men’s minds, an evil still very much alive in our time, especially in our own ranks.

We still have preachers who do not hesitate to tell their people what they may or may not read. This journal sometimes makes the censored list, and the stories that come back to us in this regard make interesting reading. The ministers in question are sufficiently mature to read us, but they fear for their people who may be disturbed by what we say. Even Bible chair directors at universities who should be eager to get their hands on anything that might challenge the thinking of today’s youth are often found relegating our “far out” or “liberal” journals to special depositories where only more advanced students might see them.

Our unity meetings sometimes get this kind of treatment, especially when controversial names are listed on the program. The congregation must be protected, so it is subjected to the same old bromides from Sunday to Sunday, while the minister basks in the sun shine and freshness of new insights, provided by the unity sessions. It is as if it were appropriate

for the minister to think, but not for his people. Must mind-expanding experiences be the prerogative of the clergy?

Our young people are tiring of this kind of distrust of their faith. They are warned against marrying "outside the church," and so they are made to feel guilty for dating someone in another communion, however pious he may be. Some prudish joker is supposedly more promising since he is *of us.* The preachers have too long done the thinking for our youth as to whether they should dance, smoke or kiss. I recall the lad in a small Texas city where I ministered as a young man. He dared to attend a movie one Saturday afternoon, and to someone who caught him at it he said, "What-ever you do, don't tell brother Garrett!" He seemed willing to take his chances with the Lord, but for the preacher to know was something else!

Even more serious is the way we have cut our youth off from the rest of the Christian community, and along with it we have taught them to hate. Even the most promising programs of Methodists and Baptists have been off limits, and how often have we arranged or participated in such an affair as an all-city youth rally that included the young people of all the denominations? Our young people have to go away to college before they have such broadening experiences as a coke and cookie get-together with clergymen of all faiths. Perhaps this is why only 10% choose (not all *choose*!) to attend one of our Christian colleges, for even there the same limitations are brought to bear upon them.

Much of this insidiousness is to be laid at the feet of our preachers. They *could* lead our youth into green pastures and beside still waters, bringing them the refreshment of new acquaintances and new ideas. They choose rather to enslave, a clerical prerogative that is all too often successful, as Dostoevsky so well dramatizes in his story of the Grand Inquistitor, where the cardinal has the power to turn even Jesus out into the night.

We are thankful that this picture is changing somewhat throughout the Christian community. The pulpit is less "the sacred desk" where only those ordained by the fathers of the church may stand, and more a forum where any believer may witness to his life in Christ. Even in the Roman church laymen are joining the clergy in the performance of the mass. More striking is the emergence of young clergymen who, though disenchanted with the pulpit, find an exciting ministry in the coffee shops of skid row. Young priests, wearing sweaters instead of clerical collars, are going out where the action is. If the institutional church is in trouble, the clergy system is also waning.

The seminaries are well aware of the evils of clericalism in modern society, and they may do more than anything else in achieving its demise, as unlikely as that may seem, being themselves clerical institutions. In recent years they have greatly enlarged their concept of *ministry,* not only in including women in their programs but by curricula that cut across a huge hunk of our culture. They are hardly "preacher factories" any longer, for men and women go out from them into scores of ministries that reach all the way from

counseling the deprived in a ghetto to teaching ethics in a community college. In the shifting scenes the classroom, conference table, hospital ward, art studio, community center, coffee shops, and street corners overshadow the pulpit in significance.

I was impressed by remarks made by Dean Krister Stendahl of Harvard Divinity School in a recent report to the president of the university. Dealing with the problem of the draft, he explained that some of those who applied for entrance to the school admitted that they were motivated by the prospect of being drafted, and so the divinity school was made "an alternative to Canada or Sweden." He observed that he thought the faculty could not sit in judgment on such motives, and so applicants were chosen in view of their qualifications and their promise of religious leadership.

But he said something even more interesting. There are other students who, though they are fully qualified for exemption from the draft, insist on *not* accepting the prerogative.

> Some of our students are strongly opposed to the exempt status of clergy and theological students and insist on not using this "privilege" even where it fully applies to them. It is my conviction that they are right. The time must come soon when church leaders, theological educators, clergy, and students combine their efforts to abolish all types of clergy privileges. Such privileges are outdated and contrary to the whole thrust of contemporary understanding of the relation between clergy and laymen.

This viewpoint could not have come from the dean's office of a seminary even a few years ago, and it is novel enough even now. But it shows how the church is adjusting to a changing world. The dean favors the abolition of all clerical privileges. I fear that he is a step ahead of most of our brethren, and we are suppose to be a people who recognizes no distinction between clergy and laity, gloriously restoring as we have the priesthood of all believers.

It is also encouraging to know that there are those young men in the seminaries who want no special music played for them, men who are willing to yield to the draft rather than accept clerical exemption. If such ones do go to war, they are likely to be listened to with more respect when they return than those who use the clerical garb as a hiding place.

But what is important here is that a divinity school dean and some seminarians are saying that they do not want to be treated differently from other men. It is a witness to the priesthood of all believers and an assertion, that all Christians are ministers. Such a viewpoint softens the distinction between the sacred and the secular. To say that "the Parson" has as much business in a foxhole as the man in the pew is something like saying that the man in the pew has as much business in the pulpit as "the Parson." Or it is like saying that one may worship God as much at work on Monday as at church on Sunday.—*the Editor*

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CHALLENGE OF THE SECULAR ORDER

PERRY GRESHAM

Thirty years ago I was an advanced graduate student at Columbia University. By special permission we were living in the comfortable apartments of Union Theological Seminary. Paul Tillich was my next door neighbor. We fell in together as we walked home from Broadway one snowy January day. I asked him his impression of the church in the 1940's.

I clearly remember his opening sentence which is just as pertinent for the 1970's. "The church is losing its identity with centers of power in the secular order." There was a time when a politician felt impelled to show his church identity. Men of business cherished their church affiliations as an important factor in public posture. Public education was once the educational expression of the Protestant church mission. Philanthropy found its wellsprings in the churches.

The snow falls on these Bethany hills today as it fell on the grey pavement in front of Riverside Church then. Paul Tillich is dead and I am sixty-two. The prophecy is now fact. The church must regain its redemptive relationship with the secular order or civilization will be the loser, for when faith flies out the window, superstition walks in the front door.

Opportunity sounds its trumpet from every church portal. Government, business, labor, the professions, and even entertainment are in search of meaning which the church could supply. Any vital church in any city could do more toward human urban renewal than some new project of government, industry, or both.

The perspective of the church based on the love of God and the derivative love of man is precisely what the secular world needs. War, greed, crime and violence stem from the Cain influence in man. The church with its new unity throughout the world could start a new era based on love such as the apostles started in the first century. The era of reconciliation begins in a local church and the attitude of intelligent goodwill begins in the individual human heart.

Perry Gresham is president of Bethany College, Bethany, West Virginia.

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VIGNETTES

ROBERT MEYERS

Touch and Learn

It is Sunday morning. My little son Devon sits in church beside Winfred, a black boy his own age. Each is quietly busy with whatever tiny distractions will let them ignore me, a perfectly reasonable response to words not aimed at them.

Suddenly Devon looks over at Winfred's head with its wiry, tightly-curled hair. Passive speculation lasts only a few seconds before he reaches his hand up and touches it down gently on top of the black boy's head. His fingers rub the wiry little whorls, feeding on this strange difference. Then, without a word, he brings his hand back to himself.

Winfred accepts instantly the simple, warm curiosity that began this game. His small black hand goes up to my son's straight silky-blond hair. With visible delight he tastes with his fingers this peculiarity of his friend's and then, without a word, he too returns his hand to its former business.

Neither says a word then or later. The incident is closed, each has found what he sought, and for them there was nothing strange about their candid need to touch and learn. But for those of us who saw it that day it seemed a minuscule parable of the way we might reach out in trusting honesty to bridge the gaps that separate us.

Living Death

I read somewhere of a discreet female crab named the *Hapalocarcinus marsupialis* who counters the hazards of sea life by taking up residence when very young in the fork of two coral branches. These gradually form a cage around her so that nothing predatory can get at her. She comes to be completely enclosed, absolutely safe, with only the total loss of freedom ever to move again as the price she pays.

This young crab symbolizes the philosophy some have in their religious life. They cooperate with others to build slowly and patiently a rock-hard prison around their minds, excluding sympathetic consideration of any ideas which contradict those they have decided are true. They boast of being protected from the dangerous "world", never realizing that they have condemned themselves to a kind of living death.

New Source of Power

One Wednesday evening we had a young woman talk to us of her baptism in the Holy Spirit and her experiences with speaking in tongues. A former student of mine, her manner was poised and gracious. She talked calmly of having spoken in tongues once or more each day for over a year and seemed radiantly certain that the experience had brought new power into her life.

When one of our ladies asked if she would pray in tongues she replied that although she did not wish to do so as a “parlor trick”, she would do so if we had a definite request. Another lady asked for prayer for a black girl we had tried futilely to help, and the young woman consented to pray.

She began in English and spoke a lovely prayer in behalf of the girl named. Then she began, without perceptible change in voice modulation or emotion, to speak sounds which were not comprehensible to us although they were both melodious and rhythmical. There was nothing in the least theatrical about her prayer. It continued to have dignity.

She claimed that her first tongue-speaking was in Latin, a language she had not learned. A college teacher, she had been translated by Latin teachers who heard her. She did not know what language she was now speaking, but she claimed to understand in her own heart what she was saying.

She claimed some extraordinary cures were being wrought through the power of the Holy Spirit, adding that some were even being raised from the dead in “foreign lands, where people are less prejudiced.”

I felt that a skeptic could reply: “And where people are more superstitious, less scientifically oriented, and less easily checked out by adequate methods of verification.” But a skeptic also would have had to deal with her confidence and her winning humility as she told us joyously of the power that had come into her life.

Our guest was neither stupid nor hypocritical. Whether she had simply looked for something new and helpful until she half-created it, I do not know. I came away from the evening with great sympathy for her, but with the persistent conviction that my mind is one with Paul’s who, though he would not have forbidden her, preferred to speak five words with his understanding than ten thousand in an unknown tongue. What perhaps remained longest in our minds about the evening was the radiant joy this young woman felt about her devotion to the Lord. If we were not sure that her specific experience was the way for us, we were at least convinced anew of the drabness of much that passes for Christian commitment. Churches are full of people who are not satisfied and who want to find some new source of power. That is a fact which no single one of us can dare to forget.

To Young Preachers

I sometimes remember, with a slight shudder, the early age at which I began to preach. Fifteen years old, armed with some two hundred memorized proof texts and a half-dozen sermon outline books, I assaulted my elders each Sunday morning with perfect confidence that while I might be young the Truth was eternal, and I had it.

My transportation was a Model A Ford with maroon body and orange wheels (I had exquisite color sense). It must have been some sight, it and I, traveling down the graveled, wash-boardy road to the small schoolhouse in Ryal, Oklahoma. And when I got there, how had I nerve enough to speak? What had I to say except second-hand messages and untested truths? Nothing, really, but I was blissfully ignorant of the fact.

Remembering those days, I dedicate to all young preachers this passage from Anthony Trollope's fine nineteenth century novel, *Barchester Towers:*

"It often surprises us that very young men can muster courage to preach for the first time to a strange congregation. Men who are as yet but little more than boys, who have but just left, what indeed we may not call a school, but a seminary intended for their tuition as scholars, whose thoughts have been mostly of boating, cricketing, and wine parties, ascend a rostrum high above the heads of the submissive crowd, not that they may read God's word to those below, but that they may preach their own word for the edification of their hearers.

"It seems strange to us that they are not stricken dumb by the new and awful solemnity of their position. 'How am I, just turned twenty-three, who have never yet passed ten thoughtful days since the power of thought first came to me, how am I to instruct these grey beards, who with the weary thinking of so many years have approached so near the grave? Can I teach them their duty? Can I explain to them that which I so imperfectly understand, that which years of study may have made so plain to them? Has my newly acquired privilege, as one of God's ministers, imparted to me as yet any fitness for the wonderful work of a preacher'?"

Trollope thinks twenty-three too early! Many of my friends began at sixteen and eighteen. How insouciant and sure we were as we went to our "appointments". I suspect that these friends of the past, wherever they are now, join me in hoping that the gracious Lord will forgive us for all the times we were so confidently ignorant, and for the loud noises we made in the mistaken notion that we were speaking something profound.

The "Pure Church"

In a recent *Christian Chronicle* note Dow Merritt, a marvelous old Christian gentleman who has sacrificed much in order to live our his convictions, says something interesting about the church in Africa as contrasted with the church in America (he means the Church

of Christ). He says that he and his wife “have decided that you may have to go to Africa to find the pure church after a while.”

This “pure church” idea has been a will-o’-the-wisp for several generations, leading churchmen through some mighty boggy ground. There never was a “pure church”, except in the mind of God. The moment the idea gets embodied in men it stops being pure. Mr. Merritt finds the church in America too materialistic and unsociable, so it isn’t hard to see why the church in Africa is superior to it. His wife believes that the Lord has taken his church to Africa and that the Africans will have to come over here and evangelize America by and by.

We shall probably all be happier if we accept the conditions under which churches must exist. Composed of human beings, they will always be. Instead of concentrating on “purifying” the church (which inevitably takes the form of concern with its music, its hierarchy, its interpretations), it might be preferable to learn how to love its widely varied individuals into greater maturity, recognizing all the while that none of us ever escape entirely the limiting matrixes in which we were born and reared.

Middle East at Last

And while the *Chronicle* is still in mind, how is this lead sentence from a news story printed there: “Thirty-seven people were baptized in the first gospel meeting held in the Middle East since the time of the Apostles?”

The Middle East is a pretty big chunk of real estate. Nineteen hundred years is a pretty long time. The Methodists and Baptists and Presbyterians have been preaching in various parts of the Middle East for the last couple of hundred years. Before them, at various times, there were others who claimed to be Christians and who told the story of Christ on Middle East soil.

But no matter. The Church of Christ had never been on that territory with a gospel meeting until a few months ago, so the gospel had not been preached there since the Apostles went out from the Fifth and Main Street Church of Christ in Jerusalem. Let us hope that the people of the Middle East are properly appreciative of our having gotten, at long last, to them.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

Response from Readers

I must tell you that things are truly looking up. There seems to be fresh air blowing through the musty chambers of "The Church of Christ" and a lot of people are looking over the fences that we have built between ourselves and other Christians.—*Oregon*

Certainly we who claim to be His children must pay a big price in that great day for our division and schism. How can we win the world to Christian unity when we don't know, or knowing do not practice, it ourselves. Shame upon us! God's plan is set as it has been before the creation. What you or I or anyone else believes about Christ's return will not alter God's plan. To me, simple though I may be, the only thing that *really matters* is that I am ready for that time. If I am in Christ when He returns He will take me. I don't care whether its before or after the millennium. And I don't care whether its back to earth for a thousand years, or straight into the New Jerusalem. Just so we are ready!—*Iowa*

I would like to take this brief moment to express my appreciation for you and your writings. I have not been a reader for very long, but I have grown to appreciate the thoughtfulness with which you discuss the various topics. You have truly stimulated my mind and I hope the results, both now and in the future, will be pleasing to the Lord. I especially appreciated "A World Turned Black" as after graduation I will begin working with Negro brethren...—*Oklahoma*

I continue to enjoy *Restoration Review and* find myself passing much of it along to the two classes I teach each week.—*Tennessee*

I was personally moved as I read your "A World Turned Black." My wife, daughter and I have been part-time Negroes since last October. We are working with a new interracial congregation and in so doing are enjoying the work of the Kingdom to an extent not previously thought possible. Christianity *must* transcend every social, cultural, and racial barrier. I just wish that every Christian could experience the rich rewards that God has granted in response to our feeble efforts toward an unsegregated Christianity. These twenty million people upon whom the Restoration heritage has turned its back have so much that they can add to our own spiritual development.—*Indiana*

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BOOK NOTES

The New English Bible is to be published in March. This is the entire Bible, not just the *New Testament* which was issued in 1961. Our advance copy reveals that this is a tremendous piece of work, a fresh and authoritative translation of the Bible in modern English. It has been twenty years in preparation. It attempts to avoid both archaisms and transient modernisms in making the scriptures as contemporary as the daily newspaper. Prof. C. H. Dodd of Cambridge was the director of the project, and he set forth three principles that guided the work: (1) The work is to be a new translation, not just a revision of previous works, having the objective of rendering the original into contemporary English; (2) Regard shall be paid to the native idiom and current usage of the English language, with Hebraisms and other un-English expressions avoided; (3) The translation shall be printed in paragraph form, with poetical books and passages shall be in verse form, and the modern system of punctuation, including quotation marks, shall be employed.

It is perhaps the first such work that has had young people especially in mind. But they also had in mind "that considerable number of intelligent people who do attend church, for whom the traditional language is so familiar that its phrases slide over their minds almost without stirring a ripple." Dr. Dodd put it this way: "We aim at a version which shall be as intelligible to contemporary readers as the original version was to its first readers—or as nearly so as possible."

The text is large and clear, with the type set in single column rather than the usual two. Subject matter on a page is given at the top and sections are set off under separate heading, such as Gen. 6:1 having the title of "The flood and the tower of Babel." The names for the Creator are settled by using *Lord* (instead of Jehovah or Yahweh) and *God. Job* is set in poetry. The author of *Ecclesiastes* is the "Speaker" rather than "Preacher," and in *Isaiah* it is "the chief officer" who confronts Hezekiah rather than Rabshakeh.

The *New Testament*, published ten years ago, has undergone constant revision in an effort to benefit from all criticisms made of it. So in getting the Standard Edition in one volume one will have in hand the completed work of the corporate body of translators. There are other editions, but we have elected to handle only the Standard Edition, consisting of both Testaments. The price is 8.95. The binding is in handsome blue with gold print, but looking as much like a college text as anything else.

Once you have this volume in hand, I would suggest you begin at once to read it aloud in the family circle, and use it to compare readings in other versions. If you send the 8.95 in cash, we'll pay the postage. I would urge that you order at once, for the demand will be great. In just 10 years the *New Testament* alone sold over 7 millions copies!

The *New Testament* (Second Edition) is available in paperback at only 1.75.

Those who are interested in a serious study of *Isaiah* should consider the 3-volume work of Edward J. Young at 9.95 per volume. It is a conservative work, arguing for the unity of the book, but giving both sides to the question of a Second Isaiah.

We list here a number of titles that have been favorites with our readers. You might want to pick up your copy.

The New Testament by Oscar Cullmann is an introduction that provides insights into how the writings came about and how they compare with each other. 1.95.

More Than a Man Can Take is a study of the Book of Job. 2.25.

Making Ethical Decisions discusses moral problems of the Christian. In his discussion of friendship he shows how Jesus preferred the wrong kind of people. Only 1.00.

The Threshold of Christianity is a study of the times between the Testaments. 96 pages packed with information. 1.85.

Servants without Hire is a study of concept of the ministry in Campbell-Stone Movement. 2.50.

We still have copies of *Voices of Concern: Critical Studies in Church of Christism* at 3.50.

A. T. DeGroot's *The Restoration Principle* gives one the background to the idea of Restoration, which goes far back into church history, long before the Campbells came along. Then he gives his idea of what this means in our day. Only 1.50.

A history of the Restoration Movement that we should all have is *Christians Only* by James DeForest Murch. 3.50.

Hazard of the Die is the story of Tolbert Fanning and the Restoration Movement. 4.95.

We will send you 6 volumes of Carl Ketcherside's *Mission Messenger* for only 18.00, and allow you to pay for them at 5.00 monthly with no additional charge.

We will send you on the same basis the 17-volume *Daily Bible Study* by Barclay, which sells for 47.00. It is a big seller all over the nation and in Europe.

Why Christians Crack Up gets into the psychology of your Christian self, dealing as it does with emotional disturbances, their roots and remedies. It also talks about your neighbor! 3.95.

ADVENTURES IN CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

This is a series of monthly meetings which will be held on every first Monday at 7:30 at Wynnewood Chapel, 2303 S. Tyler, Dallas. An able brother of the area, from all Restoration groups, will be invited each month to explore some subject in depth, then share in an open discussion with those present. We are hopeful of this being very edifying and intensely interesting. The first meeting is April 6 with Prof. David Reagan of Austin College in Sherman as the speaker. For more information call either L. M. Roberts ar 337-1678 or Dick Smith at 371-7501.

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